FIRST CALL FOR CHILDREN

WORLD DECLARATION
AND PLAN OF ACTION FROM
THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR CHILDREN

CONVENTION ON THE
RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

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FIRST CALL FOR CHILDREN

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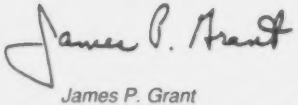
FOREWORD

On 29–30 September 1990 the largest gathering of world leaders in history assembled at the United Nations to attend the World Summit for Children. Led by 71 heads of State and Government and 88 other senior officials, mostly at the ministerial level, the World Summit adopted a Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and a Plan of Action for implementing the Declaration in the 1990s.

This booklet contains the text of these historic documents. Also included is the text of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 November 1989, the Convention came into force on 2 September 1990, in less time than any other human rights convention. The World Summit for Children, which strongly endorsed the Convention, was, in a real sense, the first major global action for its implementation.

Together, the Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children and the Convention on the Rights of the Child constitute an ambitious but feasible agenda for the well-being of children to be achieved by the year 2000. In committing themselves to pursue these goals, the leaders of the world have agreed to be guided by the principle of a 'first call for children' — a principle that the essential needs of children should be given high priority in the allocation of resources, in bad times as well as in good times, at national and international as well as at family levels.

UNICEF is proud to be associated with the World Summit for Children and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We are aware that UNICEF is only one among many others — Governments, non-governmental organizations, international agencies and individuals — who have a duty and a clearly assigned role to follow up on the implementation of the Summit and the Convention. I commend this booklet to you as a reminder of your personal and institutional obligation to keep the promise that the international community has made in these documents to give every child a better future.



New York
December 1990

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PART ONE

WORLD DECLARATION ON THE SURVIVAL, PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN

PLAN OF ACTION FOR IMPLEMENTING THE WORLD DECLARATION IN THE 1990s

WORLD DECLARATION ON THE SURVIVAL, PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN

Agreed to at the World Summit for Children on 30 September 1990

1. We have gathered at the World Summit for Children to undertake a joint commitment and to make an urgent universal appeal — to give every child a better future.

2. The children of the world are innocent, vulnerable and dependent. They are also curious, active and full of hope. Their time should be one of joy and peace, of playing, learning and growing. Their future should be shaped in harmony and co-operation. Their lives should mature, as they broaden their perspectives and gain new experiences.

3. But for many children, the reality of childhood is altogether different.

The challenge

4. Each day, countless children around the world are exposed to dangers that hamper their growth and development. They suffer immensely as casualties of war and violence; as victims of racial discrimination, apartheid, aggression, foreign occupation and annexation; as refugees and displaced children, forced to abandon their homes and their roots; as disabled; or as victims of neglect, cruelty and exploitation.

5. Each day, millions of children suffer from the scourges of poverty and economic crisis — from hunger and homelessness, from epidemics and illiteracy, from degradation

of the environment. They suffer from the grave effects of the problems of external indebtedness and also from the lack of sustained and sustainable growth in many developing countries, particularly the least developed ones.

6. Each day, 40,000 children die from malnutrition and disease, including acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), from the lack of clean water and inadequate sanitation and from the effects of the drug problem.

7. These are challenges that we, as political leaders, must meet.

The opportunity

8. Together, our nations have the means and the knowledge to protect the lives and to diminish enormously the suffering of children, to promote the full development of their human potential and to make them aware of their needs, rights and opportunities. The Convention on the Rights of the Child provides a new opportunity to make respect for children's rights and welfare truly universal.

9. Recent improvements in the international political climate can facilitate this task. Through international co-operation and solidarity it should now be possible to achieve concrete results in many fields — to revitalize economic growth and development, to protect the environment, to prevent the spread of fatal and crippling diseases and to achieve greater social and economic justice. The current moves towards disarmament also mean that significant resources could be released for purposes other than military ones. Improving the well-being of children must be a very high priority when these resources are reallocated.

The task

10. Enhancement of children's health and nutrition is a first duty, and also a task for which solutions are now within reach. The lives of tens of thousands of boys and girls can be saved every day, because the causes of their death are readily preventable. Child and infant mortality is unacceptably high in many parts of the world, but can be lowered dramatically with means that are already known and easily accessible.

11. Further attention, care and support should be accorded to disabled children, as well as to other children in very difficult circumstances.

12. Strengthening the role of women in general and ensuring their equal rights will be to the advantage of the world's children. Girls must be given equal treatment and opportunities from the very beginning.

13. At present, over 100 million children are without basic schooling, and two-thirds of them are girls. The provision of basic education and literacy for all are among the most important contributions that can be made to the development of the world's children.

14. Half a million mothers die each year from causes related to childbirth. Safe motherhood must be promoted in all possible ways. Emphasis must be placed on responsible planning of family size and on child spacing. The family, as a fundamental group and natural environment for the growth and well-being of children, should be given all necessary protection and assistance.

15. All children must be given the chance to find their identity and realize their worth in a safe and supportive environ-

ment, through families and other care-givers committed to their welfare. They must be prepared for responsible life in a free society. They should, from their early years, be encouraged to participate in the cultural life of their societies.

16. Economic conditions will continue to influence greatly the fate of children, especially in developing nations. For the sake of the future of all children, it is urgently necessary to ensure or reactivate sustained and sustainable economic growth and development in all countries and also to continue to give urgent attention to an early, broad and durable solution to the external debt problems facing developing debtor countries.

17. These tasks require a continued and concerted effort by all nations, through national action and international co-operation.

The commitment

18. The well-being of children requires political action at the highest level. We are determined to take that action.

19. We ourselves hereby make a solemn commitment to give high priority to the rights of children, to their survival and to their protection and development. This will also ensure the well-being of all societies.

20. We have agreed that we will act together, in international co-operation, as well as in our respective countries. We now commit ourselves to the following 10-point programme to protect the rights of children and to improve their lives:

    (1) We will work to promote earliest possible ratification

and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Programmes to encourage information about children's rights should be launched worldwide, taking into account the distinct cultural and social values in different countries.

(2) We will work for a solid effort of national and international action to enhance children's health, to promote pre-natal care and to lower infant and child mortality in all countries and among all peoples. We will promote the provision of clean water in all communities for all their children, as well as universal access to sanitation.

(3) We will work for optimal growth and development in childhood, through measures to eradicate hunger, malnutrition and famine, and thus to relieve millions of children of tragic sufferings in a world that has the means to feed all its citizens.

(4) We will work to strengthen the role and status of women. We will promote responsible planning of family size, child spacing, breastfeeding and safe motherhood.

(5) We will work for respect for the role of the family in providing for children and will support the efforts of parents, other care-givers and communities to nurture and care for children, from the earliest stages of childhood through adolescence. We also recognize the special needs of children who are separated from their families.

(6) We will work for programmes that reduce illiteracy and provide educational opportunities for all children, irrespective of their background and gender; that

prepare children for productive employment and life-long learning opportunities, i.e. through vocational training; and that enable children to grow to adulthood within a supportive and nurturing cultural and social context.

(7) We will work to ameliorate the plight of millions of children who live under especially difficult circumstances — as victims of apartheid and foreign occupation; orphans and street children and children of migrant workers; the displaced children and victims of natural and man-made disasters; the disabled and the abused, the socially disadvantaged and the exploited. Refugee children must be helped to find new roots in life. We will work for special protection of the working child and for the abolition of illegal child labour. We will do our best to ensure that children are not drawn into becoming victims of the scourge of illicit drugs.

(8) We will work carefully to protect children from the scourge of war and to take measures to prevent further armed conflicts, in order to give children everywhere a peaceful and secure future. We will promote the values of peace, understanding and dialogue in the education of children. The essential needs of children and families must be protected even in times of war and in violence-ridden areas. We ask that periods of tranquillity and special relief corridors be observed for the benefit of children, where war and violence are still taking place.

(9) We will work for common measures for the protection of the environment, at all levels, so that all children can enjoy a safer and healthier future.

(10) We will work for a global attack on poverty, which would have immediate benefits for children's welfare. The vulnerability and special needs of the children of the developing countries, and in particular the least developed ones, deserve priority. But growth and development need promotion in all States, through national action and international co-operation. That calls for transfers of appropriate additional resources to developing countries as well as improved terms of trade, further trade liberalization and measures for debt relief. It also implies structural adjustments that promote world economic growth, particularly in developing countries, while ensuring the well-being of the most vulnerable sectors of the populations, in particular the children.

The next steps

21. The World Summit for Children has presented us with a challenge to take action. We have agreed to take up that challenge.

22. Among the partnerships we seek, we turn especially to children themselves. We appeal to them to participate in this effort.

23. We also seek the support of the United Nations system, as well as other international and regional organizations, in the universal effort to promote the well-being of children. We ask for greater involvement on the part of non-governmental organizations, in complementing national efforts and joint international action in this field.

24. We have decided to adopt and implement a Plan of Action, as a framework for more specific national and

international undertakings. We appeal to all our colleagues to endorse that Plan. We are prepared to make available the resources to meet these commitments, as part of the priorities of our national plans.

25. We do this not only for the present generation, but for all generations to come. There can be no task nobler than giving every child a better future.

New York, 30 September 1990

PLAN OF ACTION FOR IMPLEMENTING THE WORLD DECLARATION ON THE SURVIVAL, PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN IN THE 1990s

I. **INTRODUCTION**

II. **SPECIFIC ACTIONS FOR CHILD SURVIVAL, PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT**

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Child health

Food and nutrition

Role of women, maternal health and family planning

Role of the family

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Children in especially difficult circumstances

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Action at the national level

Action at the international level

APPENDIX:

Goals for children and development in the 1990s

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This Plan of Action is intended as a guide for national Governments, international organizations, bilateral aid agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and all other sectors of society in formulating their own programmes of action for ensuring the implementation of the Declaration of the World Summit for Children.

2. The needs and problems of children vary from country to country, and indeed from community to community. Individual countries and groups of countries, as well as international, regional, national and local organizations, may use this Plan of Action to develop their own specific programmes in line with their needs, capacity and mandates. However, parents, elders and leaders at all levels throughout the world have certain common aspirations for the well-being of their children. This Plan of Action deals with these common aspirations, suggesting a set of goals and targets for children in the 1990s, strategies for reaching those goals and commitments for action and follow-up measures at various levels.

3. Progress for children should be a key goal of overall national development. It should also form an integral part of the broader international development strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade. As today's children are the citizens of tomorrow's world, their survival, protection and development is the prerequisite for the future development of humanity. Empowerment of the younger generation with knowledge and resources to meet their basic human needs and to grow to their full potential should be a primary goal of national development. As their individual development and social contribu-

tion will shape the future of the world, investment in children's health, nutrition and education is the foundation for national development.

4. The aspirations of the international community for the well-being of children are best reflected in the Convention on the Rights of the Child unanimously adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1989. This Convention sets universal legal standards for the protection of children against neglect, abuse and exploitation, as well as guaranteeing to them their basic human rights, including survival, development and full participation in social, cultural, educational and other endeavours necessary for their individual growth and well-being. The Declaration of the World Summit calls on all Governments to promote earliest possible ratification and implementation of the Convention.

5. In the past two years, a set of goals for children and development in the 1990s have been formulated in several international forums attended by virtually all Governments, relevant United Nations agencies and major NGOs. In support of these goals and in line with the growing international consensus in favour of greater attention to the human dimension of development in the 1990s, this Plan of Action calls for concerted national action and international co-operation to strive for the achievement, in all countries, of the following major goals for the survival, protection and development of children by the year 2000.

   (a) Reduction of 1990 under-5 child mortality rates by one third or to a level of 70 per 1,000 live births, whichever is the greater reduction;

(b) Reduction of maternal mortality rates by half of 1990 levels;

(c) Reduction of severe and moderate malnutrition among under-5 children by one half of 1990 levels;

(d) Universal access to safe drinking water and to sanitary means of excreta disposal;

(e) Universal access to basic education and completion of primary education by at least 80 per cent of primary school age children;

(f) Reduction of the adult illiteracy rate to at least half its 1990 level (the appropriate age group to be determined in each country), with emphasis on female literacy;

(g) Protection of children in especially difficult circumstances, particularly in situations of armed conflicts.

6. A list of more detailed sectoral goals and specific actions which would enable the attainment of the above major goals can be found in the appendix to this Plan of Action. These goals will first need to be adapted to the specific realities of each country in terms of phasing, priorities, standards and availability of resources. The strategies for the achievement of the goals may also vary from country to country. Some countries may wish to add other development goals that are uniquely important and relevant for their specific country situation. Such adaptation of the goals is of crucial importance to ensure their technical validity, logistical feasibility, financial affordability and to secure political commitment and broad public support for their achievement.

7. Within the context of these overall goals, there are promising opportunities for eradicating or virtually eliminating age-old diseases that have afflicted tens of millions of children for centuries and for improving the quality of life of generations to come. Achievement of these goals would also contribute to lowering population growth, as sustained decline in child death rates towards the level at which parents become confident that their first children will survive is, with some time lag, followed by even greater reduction in child births. To seize these opportunities the Declaration of the World Summit for Children calls for specific actions in the following areas:

The Convention on the Rights of the Child

8. The Convention on the Rights of the Child, unanimously adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, contains a comprehensive set of international legal norms for the protection and well-being of children. All Governments are urged to promote earliest possible ratification of the Convention, where it has not already been ratified. Every possible effort should be made in all countries to disseminate the Convention and, wherever it has already been ratified, to promote its implementation and monitoring.

Child health

9. Preventable childhood diseases — such as measles, polio, tetanus, tuberculosis, whooping cough and diphtheria, against which there are effective vaccines, and diar-

rhoeal diseases, pneumonia and other acute respiratory infections that can be prevented or effectively treated through relatively low-cost remedies — are currently responsible for the great majority of the world's 14 million deaths of children under 5 years and disability of millions more every year. Effective action can and must be taken to combat these diseases by strengthening primary health care and basic health services in all countries.

10. Besides these readily preventable or treatable diseases and some others, such as malaria, which have proved more difficult to combat, children today are faced with the new spectre of the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) pandemic. In the most seriously affected countries HIV/AIDS threatens to offset the gains of child survival programmes. It is already a major drain on limited public health resources needed to support other priority health services. The consequences of HIV/AIDS go well beyond the suffering and death of the infected child and include risks and stigmas that affect parents and siblings and the tragedy of "AIDS orphans". There is an urgent need to ensure that programmes for the prevention and treatment of AIDS, including research on possible vaccines and cures that can be applicable in all countries and situations, and massive information and education campaigns, receive a high priority for both national action and international co-operation.

11. A major factor affecting the health of children as well as adults is the availability of clean water and safe sanitation. These are not only essential for human health and well-being, but also contribute greatly to the emancipation of women from the drudgery that has a pernicious impact on children, especially girls. Progress in child health

is unlikely to be sustained if one third of the developing world's children remain without access to clean drinking water and half of them without adequate sanitary facilities.

12. Based on the experience of the past decade, including the many innovations in simple, low-cost techniques and technologies to provide clean water and safe sanitary facilities in rural areas and urban shanty towns, it is now desirable as well as feasible, through concerted national action and international co-operation, to aim at providing all the world's children with universal access to safe drinking water and sanitary means of excreta disposal by the year 2000. An important related benefit of universal access to water and sanitation combined with health education will be the control of many water-borne diseases, among them elimination of guinea-worm disease (dracunculiasis), which currently afflicts some 10 million children in parts of Africa and Asia.

Food and nutrition

13. Hunger and malnutrition in their different forms contribute to about half of the deaths of young children. More than 20 million children suffer from severe malnutrition, 150 million are underweight and 350 million women suffer from nutritional anaemia. Improved nutrition requires (a) adequate household food security, (b) healthy environment and control of infections and (c) adequate maternal and child care. With the right policies, appropriate institutional arrangements and political priority, the world is now in a position to feed all the world's children and to overcome the worst forms of malnutrition, i.e. drastically to reduce diseases that contribute to malnutrition, to halve

protein-energy malnutrition, virtually to eliminate vitamin A deficiency and iodine deficiency disorders and to reduce nutritional anaemia significantly.

14. For the young child and the pregnant woman, provision of adequate food during pregnancy and lactation; promotion, protection and support of breastfeeding and complementary feeding practices, including frequent feeding; growth monitoring with appropriate follow-up actions; and nutritional surveillance are the most essential needs. As the child grows older, and for the adult population as a whole, an adequate diet is an obvious human priority. Meeting this need requires employment and income-generating opportunities, dissemination of knowledge and supporting services to increase food production and distribution. These are key actions within broader national strategies to combat hunger and malnutrition.

Role of women, maternal health and family planning

15. Women in their various roles play a critical part in the well-being of children. The enhancement of the status of women and their equal access to education, training, credit and other extension services constitute a valuable contribution to a nation's social and economic development. Efforts for the enhancement of women's status and their role in development must begin with the girl child. Equal opportunity should be provided for the girl child to benefit from the health, nutrition, education and other basic services to enable her to grow to her full potential.

16. Maternal health, nutrition and education are important for the survival and well-being of women in their own right and are key determinants of the health and well-being of the child in early infancy. The causes of the high rates of

infant mortality, especially neonatal mortality, are linked to untimely pregnancies, low birth weight and pre-term births, unsafe delivery, neonatal tetanus, high fertility rates, etc. These are also major risk factors for maternal mortality claiming the lives of 500,000 young women each year and resulting in ill-health and suffering for many millions more. To redress this tragedy, special attention should be given to health, nutrition and education of women.

17. All couples should have access to information on the importance of responsible planning of family size and the many advantages of child spacing to avoid pregnancies that are too early, too late, too many or too frequent. Prenatal care, clean delivery, access to referral facilities in complicated cases, tetanus toxoid vaccination and prevention of anaemia and other nutritional deficiencies during pregnancy are other important interventions to ensure safe motherhood and a healthy start in life for the newborn. There is an added benefit of promoting maternal and child health programmes and family planning together in that, acting synergistically, these activities help accelerate the reduction of both mortality and fertility rates, and contribute more to lowering rates of population growth than either type of activity alone.

Role of the family

18. The family has the primary responsibility for the nurturing and protection of children from infancy to adolescence. Introduction of children to the culture, values and norms of their society begins in the family. For the full and harmonious development of their personality, children should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of

happiness, love and understanding. Accordingly, all institutions of society should respect and support the efforts of parents and other care-givers to nurture and care for children in a family environment.

19. Every effort should be made to prevent the separation of children from their families. Whenever children are separated from their family owing to force majeur or in their own best interest, arrangements should be made for appropriate alternative family care or institutional placement, due regard being paid to the desirability of continuity in a child's upbringing in his or her own cultural milieu. Extended families, relatives and community institutions should be given support to help to meet the special needs of orphaned, displaced and abandoned children. Efforts must be made to ensure that no child is treated as an outcast from society.

Basic education and literacy

20. The international community, including virtually all the Governments of the world, have undertaken a commitment at the World Conference on Education for All at Jomtien, Thailand, to increase significantly educational opportunity for over 100 million children and nearly 1 billion adults, two thirds of them girls and women, who at present have no access to basic education and literacy. In fulfilment of that commitment, specific measures must be adopted for (a) the expansion of early childhood development activities, (b) universal access to basic education, including completion of primary education or equivalent learning achievement by at least 80 per cent of the relevant school age children with emphasis on reducing the current disparities between boys and girls, (c) the reduc-

tion of adult illiteracy by half, with emphasis on female literacy, (d) vocational training and preparation for employment and (e) increased acquisition of knowledge, skills and values through all educational channels, including modern and traditional communication media, to improve the quality of life of children and families.

21. Besides its intrinsic value for human development and improving the quality of life, progress in education and literacy can contribute significantly to improvement in maternal and child health, in protection of the environment and in sustainable development. As such, investment in basic education must be accorded a high priority in national action as well as international co-operation.

Children in especially difficult circumstances

22. Millions of children around the world live under especially difficult circumstances — as orphans and street children, as refugees or displaced persons, as victims of war and natural and man-made disasters, including such perils as exposure to radiation and dangerous chemicals, as children of migrant workers and other socially disadvantaged groups, as child workers or youth trapped in the bondage of prostitution, sexual abuse and other forms of exploitation, as disabled children and juvenile delinquents and as victims of apartheid and foreign occupation. Such children deserve special attention, protection and assistance from their families and communities and as part of national efforts and international co-operation.

23. More than 100 million children are engaged in employment, often heavy and hazardous and in contravention of international conventions which provide for their protec-

tion from economic exploitation and from performing work that interferes with their education and is harmful to their health and full development. With this in mind, all States should work to end such child-labour practices and see how the conditions and circumstances of children in legitimate employment can be protected to provide adequate opportunity for their healthy upbringing and development.

24. Drug abuse has emerged as a global menace to very large numbers of young people and, increasingly, children — including permanent damage incurred in the pre-natal stages of life. Concerted action is needed by Governments and intergovernmental agencies to combat illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances to counter this tragedy. Equally important is community action and education, which are vitally needed to curb both the supply of and the demand for illicit drugs. Tobacco and alcohol abuse are also problems requiring action, especially preventive measures and education among young people.

Protection of children during armed conflicts

25. Children need special protection in situations of armed conflict. Recent examples in which countries and opposing factions have agreed to suspend hostilities and adopt special measures such as "corridors of peace" to allow relief supplies to reach women and children and "days of tranquillity" to vaccinate and to provide other health services for children and their families in areas of conflict need to be applied in all such situations. Resolution of a conflict need not be a prerequisite for measures explicitly to protect children and their families to ensure their con-

tinuing access to food, medical care and basic services, to deal with trauma resulting from violence and to exempt them from other direct consequences of violence and hostilities. To build the foundation for a peaceful world where violence and war will cease to be acceptable means for settling disputes and conflicts, children's education should inculcate the values of peace, tolerance, understanding and dialogue.

Children and the environment

26. Children have the greatest stake in the preservation of the environment and its judicious management for sustainable development as their survival and development depends on it. The child survival and development goals proposed for the 1990s in this Plan of Action seek to improve the environment by combating disease and malnutrition and promoting education. These contribute to lowering death rates as well as birth rates, improved social services, better use of natural resources and, ultimately, to the breaking of the vicious cycle of poverty and environmental degradation.

27. With their relatively low use of capital resources and high reliance on social mobilization, community participation and appropriate technology, the programmes designed to reach the child-related goals of the 1990s are highly compatible with and supportive of environmental protection. The goals for the survival, protection and development of children as enunciated in this Plan of Action should therefore be seen as helping to protect and preserve the environment. Still more action is needed, of course, to prevent the degradation of the environment in both the industrialized and the developing countries, through

changes in the wasteful consumption patterns of the affluent and by helping to meet the necessities of survival and development of the poor. Programmes for children that not only help to meet their basic needs but which inculcate in them respect for the natural environment with the diversity of life that it sustains and its beauty and resourcefulness that enhance the quality of human life, must figure prominently in the world's environmental agenda.

Alleviation of poverty and revitalization of economic growth

28. Achievement of child related goals in the areas of health, nutrition, education, etc., will contribute much to alleviating the worst manifestations of poverty. But much more will need to be done to ensure that a solid economic base is established to meet and sustain the goals for long-term child survival, protection and development.

29. As affirmed by the international community at the eighteenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly (April 1990), a most important challenge for the 1990s is the need for revitalization of economic growth and social development in the developing countries and to address together the problems of abject poverty and hunger that continue to afflict far too many people in the world. As the most vulnerable segment of human society, children have a particular stake in sustained economic growth and alleviation of poverty, without which their well-being cannot be secured.

30. To foster a favourable international economic environment, it is essential to continue to give urgent attention to an early, broad and durable solution to the external debt problems facing developing debtor countries; to mobilize

external and domestic resources to meet the increasing needs for development finance of developing countries; to take steps to ensure that the problem of the net transfer of resources from developing to developed countries does not continue in the 1990s and that its impact is effectively addressed; to create a more open and equitable trading system to facilitate the diversification and modernization of the economies of developing countries, particularly those that are commodity-dependent; and to make available substantial concessional resources, particularly for the least developed countries.

31. In all of these efforts the fulfilment of the basic needs of children must receive a high priority. Every possible opportunity should be explored to ensure that programmes benefiting children, women and other vulnerable groups are protected in times of structural adjustments and other economic restructuring. For example, as countries reduce military expenditures, part of the resources released should be channelled to programmes for social and economic development, including those benefiting children. Debt-relief schemes could be formulated in ways that the budget reallocations and renewed economic growth made possible through such schemes would benefit programmes for children. Debt relief for children, including debt swaps for investment in social development programmes, should be considered by debtors and creditors. The international community, including private-sector creditors, are urged to work with developing countries and relevant agencies to support debt relief for children. To match increased efforts by developing countries themselves, the donor countries and international institutions should consider targetting more development assistance to primary health care, basic

education, low-cost water and sanitation programmes and other interventions specifically endorsed in the Summit Declaration and this Plan of Action.

32. The international community has recognized the need to stop and reverse the increasing marginalization of the least developed countries, including most countries of sub-Saharan Africa and many land-locked and island countries that face special development problems. These countries will require additional long-term international support to complement their own national efforts to meet the pressing needs of children over the 1990s.

III. FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS AND MONITORING

33. Effective implementation of this Plan of Action will require concerted national action and international co-operation. As affirmed in the Declaration, such action and co-operation must be guided by the principle of a "first call for children" — a principle that the essential needs of children should be given high priority in the allocation of resources, in bad times as well as in good times, at national and international as well as at family levels.

Action at the national level

34. It is particularly important that the child-specific actions proposed must be pursued as part of strengthening broader national development programmes combining revitalized economic growth, poverty reduction, human resource development and environmental protection. Such programmes must also strengthen community organizations, inculcate civic responsibility and be sensitive to

the cultural heritage and social values which support progress without alienation of the younger generation. With these broad objectives in mind, we commit ourselves and our Governments to the following actions:

(i) All Governments are urged to prepare, before the end of 1991, national programmes of action to implement the commitments undertaken in the World Summit Declaration and this Plan of Action. National Governments should encourage and assist provincial and local governments as well as NGOs, the private sector and civic groups to prepare their own programmes of action to help to implement the goals and objectives included in the Declaration and this Plan of Action;

(ii) Each country is encouraged to re-examine in the context of its national plans, programmes and policies, how it might accord higher priority to programmes for the well-being of children in general, and for meeting over the 1990s the major goals for child survival, development and protection as enumerated in the World Summit Declaration and this Plan of Action;

(iii) Each country is urged to re-examine in the context of its particular national situation, its current national budget, and in the case of donor countries, their development assistance budgets, to ensure that programmes aimed at the achievement of goals for the survival, protection and development of children will have a priority when resources are allocated. Every effort should be made to ensure that such programmes are protected in times of economic austerity and structural adjustments;

(iv) Families, communities, local governments, NGOs, social, cultural, religious, business and other institutions, including the mass media, are encouraged to play an active role in support of the goals enunciated in this Plan of Action. The experience of the 1980s shows that it is only through the mobilization of all sectors of society, including those that traditionally did not consider child survival, protection and development as their major focus, that significant progress can be achieved in these areas. All forms of social mobilization, including the effective use of the great potential of the new information and communication capacity of the world, should be marshalled to convey to all families the knowledge and skills required for dramatically improving the situation of children;

(v) Each country should establish appropriate mechanisms for the regular and timely collection, analysis and publication of data required to monitor relevant social indicators relating to the well-being of children — such as neonatal, infant and under-5 mortality rates, maternal mortality and fertility rates, nutritional levels, immunization coverage, morbidity rates of diseases of public health importance, school enrolment and achievement and literacy rates — which record the progress being made towards the goals set forth in this Plan of Action and corresponding national plans of action. Statistics should be disaggregated by gender to ensure that any inequitable impact of programmes on girls and women can be monitored and corrected. It is particularly important that mechanisms be established to alert policy makers quickly to any

adverse trends to enable timely corrective action. Indicators of human development should be periodically reviewed by national leaders and decision makers, as is currently done with indicators of economic development;

(vi) Each country is urged to re-examine its current arrangements for responding to natural disasters and man-made calamities which often afflict women and children the hardest. Countries that do not have adequate contingency planning for disaster preparedness are urged to establish such plans, seeking support from appropriate international institutions where necessary;

(vii) Progress towards the goals endorsed in the Summit Declaration and this Plan of Action could be further accelerated, and solutions to many other major problems confronting children and families greatly facilitated, through further research and development. Governments, industry and academic institutions are requested to increase their efforts in both basic and operational research, aimed at new technical and technological breakthroughs, more effective social mobilization and better delivery of existing social services. Prime examples of the areas in which research is urgently needed include, in the field of health, improved vaccination technologies, malaria, AIDS, respiratory infections, diarrhoeal diseases, nutritional deficiencies, tuberculosis, family planning and care of the newborn. Similarly there are important research needs in the area of early child development, basic education, hygiene and sanitation, and in coping with the trauma facing

children who are uprooted from their families and face other particularly difficult circumstances. Such research should involve collaboration among institutions in both the developing and the industrialized countries of the world.

Action at the international level

35. Action at the community and national levels is, of course, of critical importance in meeting the goals and aspirations for children and development. However, many developing countries, particularly the least developed and the most indebted ones, will need substantial international co-operation to enable them to participate effectively in the world-wide effort for child survival, protection and development. Accordingly, the following specific actions are proposed to create an enabling international environment for the implementation of this Plan of Action.

(i) All international development agencies — multilateral, bilateral and non-governmental — are urged to examine how they can contribute to the achievement of the goals and strategies enunciated in the Declaration and this Plan of Action as part of more general attention to human development in the 1990s. They are requested to report their plans and programmes to their respective governing bodies before the end of 1991 and periodically thereafter;

(ii) All regional institutions, including regional political and economic organizations, are requested to include consideration of the Declaration and this Plan of Action on the agenda of their meetings, including at the highest political level, with a view to developing agreements for

mutual collaboration for implementation and ongoing monitoring;

(iii) Full co-operation and collaboration of all relevant United Nations agencies and organs as well as other international institutions is requested in ensuring the achievement of the goals and objectives of the national plans envisaged in the World Summit Declaration and Plan of Action. The governing bodies of all concerned agencies are requested to ensure that within their mandates the fullest possible support is given by these agencies for the achievement of these goals;

(iv) The assistance of the United Nations is requested to institute appropriate mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of this Plan of Action, using existing expertise of the relevant United Nations statistical offices, the specialized agencies, UNICEF and other United Nations organs. Furthermore, the Secretary-General of the United Nations is requested to arrange for a mid-decade review, at all appropriate levels, of the progress being made towards implementing the commitments of the Declaration and Plan of Action;

(v) As the world's lead agency for children, the United Nations Children's Fund is requested to prepare, in close collaboration with the relevant specialized agencies and other United Nations organs, a consolidated analysis of the plans and actions undertaken by individual countries and the international community in support of the child-related development goals for the 1990s. The governing bodies of the relevant specialized agencies and United Nations organs are requested to include a periodic review of the implementation of

the Declaration and this Plan of Action at their regular sessions and to keep the General Assembly of the United Nations, through the Economic and Social Council, fully informed of progress to date and additional action required during the decade ahead.

36. The goals enunciated in the Declaration and this Plan of Action are ambitious and the commitments required to implement them will demand consistent and extraordinary effort on the part of all concerned. Fortunately, the necessary knowledge and techniques for reaching most of the goals already exist. The financial resources required are modest in relation to the great achievements that beckon. And the most essential factor — the provision to families of the information and services necessary to protect their children — is now within reach in every country and for virtually every community. There is no cause which merits a higher priority than the protection and development of children, on whom the survival, stability and advancement of all nations — and, indeed, of human civilization — depends. Full implementation of the Declaration and this Plan of Action must therefore be accorded a high priority for national action and international co-operation.

APPENDIX: GOALS FOR CHILDREN AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE 1990s

The following goals have been formulated through extensive consultation in various international forums attended by virtually all Governments, the relevant United Nations agencies including the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and a large number of NGOs. These goals are recommended for implementation by all countries where they are applicable, with appropriate adaptation to the specific situation of each country in terms of phasing, standards, priorities and availability of resources, with respect for cultural, religious and social traditions. Additional goals that are particularly relevant to a country's specific situation should be added in its national plan of action.

I. Major goals for child survival, development and protection

(a) Between 1990 and the year 2000, reduction of infant and under-5 child mortality rate by one third or to 50 and 70 per 1,000 live births respectively, whichever is less;

(b) Between 1990 and the year 2000, reduction of maternal mortality rate by half;

(c) Between 1990 and the year 2000, reduction of severe and moderate malnutrition among under-5 children by half;

(d) Universal access to safe drinking water and to sanitary means of excreta disposal;

(e) By the year 2000, universal access to basic education and completion of primary education by at least 80 per cent of primary school-age children;

(f) Reduction of the adult illiteracy rate (the appropriate age group to be determined in each country) to at least half its 1990 level with emphasis on female literacy;

(g) Improved protection of children in especially difficult circumstances.

II. Supporting/sectoral goals

A. Women's health and education

(i) Special attention to the health and nutrition of the female child and to pregnant and lactating women;

(ii) Access by all couples to information and services to prevent pregnancies that are too early, too closely spaced, too late or too many;

(iii) Access by all pregnant women to pre-natal care, trained attendants during childbirth and referral facilities for high-risk pregnancies and obstetric emergencies;

(iv) Universal access to primary education with special emphasis for girls and accelerated literacy programmes for women.

B. Nutrition

(i) Reduction in severe, as well as moderate malnutrition among under-5 children by half of 1990 levels;

(ii) Reduction of the rate of low birth weight (less than 2.5 kg) to less than 10 per cent;

(iii) Reduction of iron deficiency anaemia in women by one third of the 1990 levels;

(iv) Virtual elimination of iodine deficiency disorders;

(v) Virtual elimination of vitamin A deficiency and its consequences, including blindness;

(vi) Empowerment of all women to breast-feed their children exclusively for four to six months and to continue breast-feeding, with complementary food, well into the second year;

(vii) Growth promotion and its regular monitoring to be institutionalized in all countries by the end of the 1990s;

(viii) Dissemination of knowledge and supporting services to increase food production to ensure household food security.

C. Child health

(i) Global eradication of poliomyelitis by the year 2000;

(ii) Elimination of neonatal tetanus by 1995;

(iii) Reduction by 95 per cent in measles deaths and reduction by 90 per cent of measles cases compared to pre-immunization levels by 1995, as a major step to the global eradication of measles in the longer run;

(iv) Maintenance of a high level of immunization coverage (at least 90 per cent of children under one year of age by the year 2000) against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles, poliomyelitis, tuberculosis and against tetanus for women of child-bearing age;

(v) Reduction by 50 per cent in the deaths due to diarrhoea in children under the age of five years and 25 per cent reduction in the diarrhoea incidence rate;

(vi) Reduction by one third in the deaths due to acute respiratory infections in children under five years.

D. Water and sanitation

(i) Universal access to safe drinking water;

(ii) Universal access to sanitary means of excreta disposal;

(iii) Elimination of guinea-worm disease (dracunculiasis) by the year 2000.

E. Basic education

(i) Expansion of early childhood development activities, including appropriate low-cost family-

and community-based interventions;

(ii) Universal access to basic education, and achievement of primary education by at least 80 per cent of primary school-age children through formal schooling or non-formal education of comparable learning standard, with emphasis on reducing the current disparities between boys and girls;

(iii) Reduction of the adult illiteracy rate (the appropriate age group to be determined in each country) to at least half its 1990 level, with emphasis on female literacy;

(iv) Increased acquisition by individuals and families of the knowledge, skills and values required for better living, made available through all educational channels, including the mass media, other forms of modern and traditional communication and social action, with effectiveness measured in terms of behavioural change.

F. Children in difficult circumstances

Provide improved protection of children in especially difficult circumstances and tackle the root causes leading to such situations.

PARTICIPATION IN THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR CHILDREN

The Head of State or Government of the following countries participated in the World Summit for Children:

ALBANIA
ARGENTINA
BANGLADESH
BARBADOS
BELGIUM
BRAZIL
BULGARIA
BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC
CANADA
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
CHILE
COLOMBIA
COSTA RICA
CZECHOSLOVAKIA
DENMARK
DJIBOUTI
DOMINICA
EL SALVADOR
FINLAND
FRANCE
GAMBIA
GERMANY, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF
GUINEA-BISSAU
HOLY SEE
HONDURAS
ICELAND
IRELAND
ITALY
JAPAN
KUWAIT
LEBANON
LIECHTENSTEIN
LUXEMBOURG
MALDIVES
MALI
MEXICO
MONACO
MOZAMBIQUE
NAMIBIA
NICARAGUA
NIGERIA
NORWAY

PANAMA

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

PERU

POLAND

ROMANIA

RWANDA

SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS

SAINT LUCIA

SAMOA

SENEGAL

SIERRA LEONE

SPAIN

SUDAN

SURINAME

SWAZILAND

SWEDEN

TUNISIA

TURKEY

UGANDA

UKRAINIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

URUGUAY

VANUATU

VENEZUELA

YUGOSLAVIA

ZAIRE

ZIMBABWE

❖

The Head of State or Government of the following countries was represented by a State Observer at the World Summit for Children:

AFGHANISTAN
ALGERIA
ANGOLA
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
AUSTRALIA
AUSTRIA
BAHAMAS
BAHRAIN
BELIZE
BENIN
BHUTAN
BOLIVIA
BOTSWANA
BURKINA FASO
BURUNDI
CAMEROON
CAPE VERDE
CHAD
CHINA
COMOROS
CONGO
COTE D'IVOIRE
CUBA
CYPRUS
DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
ECUADOR
EGYPT
ETHIOPIA
FIJI
GABON
GHANA
GREECE
GRENADA
GUATEMALA
GUINEA
GUYANA
HAITI
HUNGARY
INDIA
INDONESIA
IRAN (ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF)
IRAQ

ISRAEL

JAMAICA

JORDAN

KENYA

LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

LESOTHO

LIBERIA

LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA

MADAGASCAR

MALAWI

MALAYSIA

MALTA

MAURITANIA

MAURITIUS

MONGOLIA

MOROCCO

MYANMAR

NEPAL

NETHERLANDS

NEW ZEALAND

NIGER

OMAN

PAKISTAN

PARAGUAY

PHILIPPINES

PORTUGAL

QATAR

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

SAN MARINO

SAUDI ARABIA

SEYCHELLES

SINGAPORE

SOMALIA

SRI LANKA

SWITZERLAND

SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

THAILAND

TOGO

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

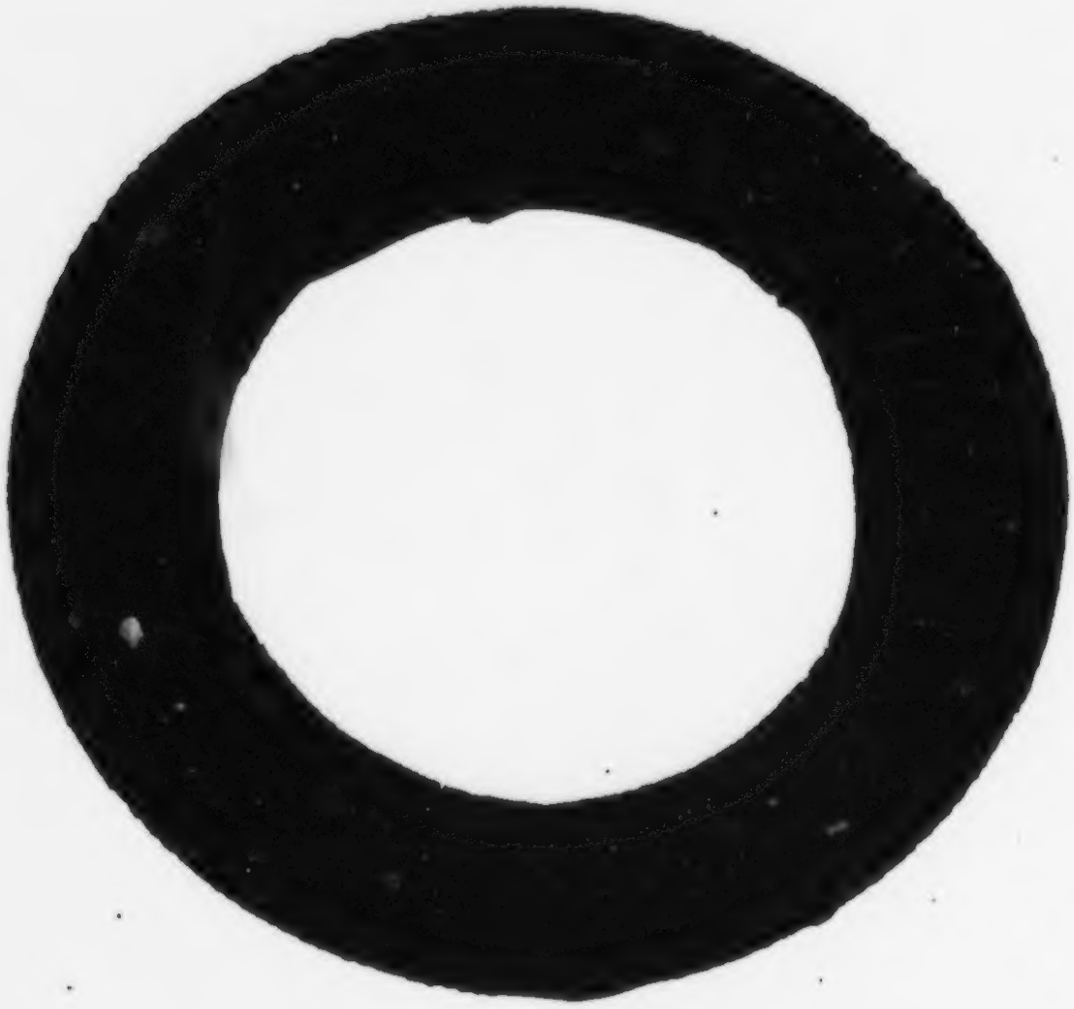
UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

VIET NAM

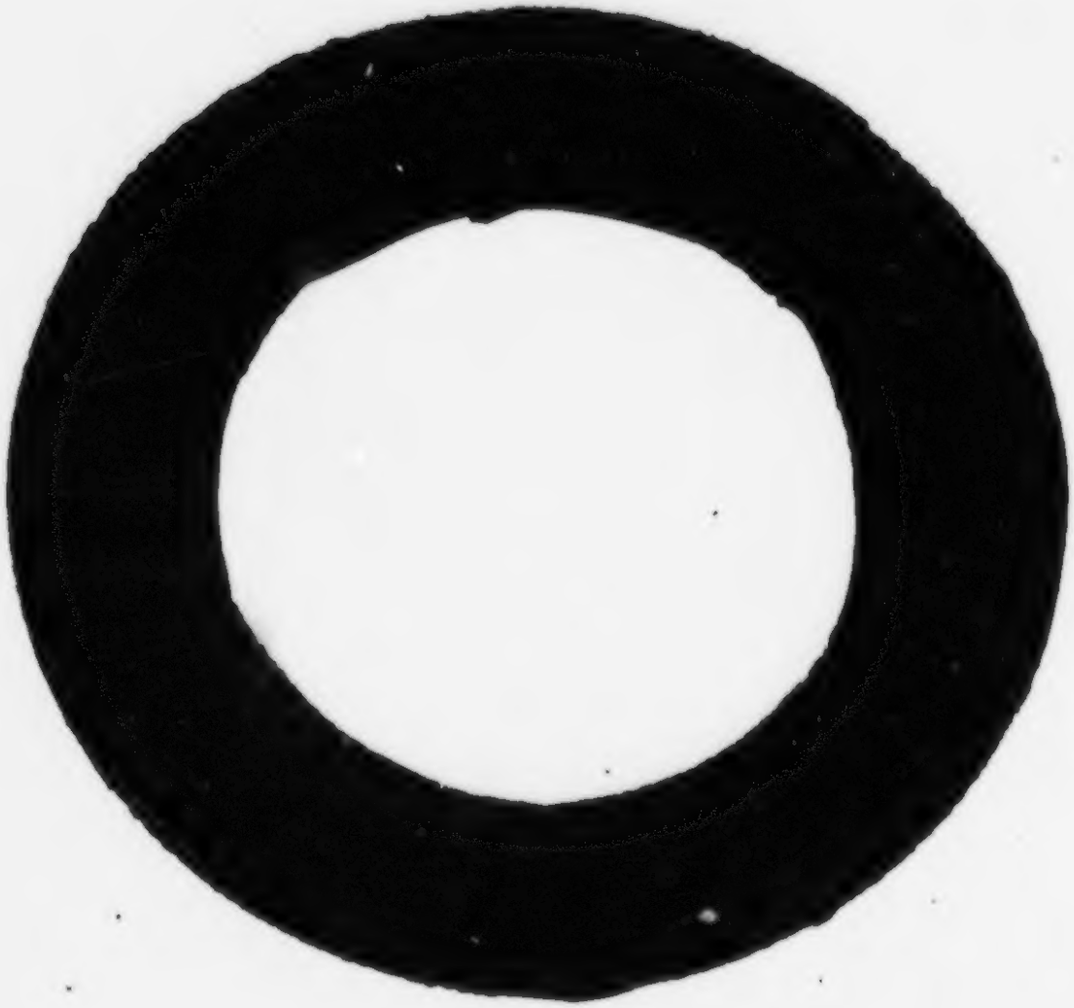
YEMEN

ZAMBIA



PART TWO

CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD



CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 20 November 1989

PREAMBLE

The States Parties to the present Convention,

Considering that, in accordance with the principles proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Bearing in mind that the peoples of the United Nations have, in the Charter, reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights and in the dignity and worth of the human person, and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Recognizing that the United Nations has, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the International Covenants on Human Rights, proclaimed and agreed that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status,

Recalling that, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations has proclaimed that childhood is entitled to special care and assistance,

Convinced that the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afford-

ed the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community,

Recognizing that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding,

Considering that the child should be fully prepared to live an individual life in society, and brought up in the spirit of the ideals proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, and in particular in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity,

Bearing in mind that the need to extend particular care to the child has been stated in the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child of 1924 and in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child adopted by the General Assembly on 20 November 1959 and recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (in particular in articles 23 and 24), in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (in particular in article 10) and in the statutes and relevant instruments of specialized agencies and international organizations concerned with the welfare of children,

Bearing in mind that, as indicated in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, "the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth",

Recalling the provisions of the Declaration on Social and Legal Principles relating to the Protection and Welfare of Children, with Special Reference to Foster Placement and Adoption Nationally and Internationally; the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile

Justice (The Beijing Rules); and the Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict,

Recognizing that, in all countries in the world, there are children living in exceptionally difficult conditions, and that such children need special consideration,

Taking due account of the importance of the traditions and cultural values of each people for the protection and harmonious development of the child,

Recognizing the importance of international co-operation for improving the living conditions of children in every country, in particular in the developing countries,

Have agreed as follows:

PART I

Article 1

For the purposes of the present Convention, a child means every human being below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

Article 2

1. States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.

2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members.

Article 3

1. In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

2. States Parties undertake to ensure the child such protection and care as is necessary for his or her well-being, taking into account the rights and duties of his or her parents, legal guardians, or other individuals legally responsible for him or her, and, to this end, shall take all appropriate legislative and administrative measures.

3. States Parties shall ensure that the institutions, services and facilities responsible for the care or protection of children shall conform with the standards established by competent authorities, particularly in the areas of safety, health, in the number and suitability of their staff, as well as competent supervision.

Article 4

States Parties shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the present Convention. With regard to economic, social and cultural rights, States Parties shall undertake such measures to the maximum extent of their available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international co-operation.

Article 5

States Parties shall respect the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents or, where applicable, the members of the extended family or community as provided for by local custom, legal guardians or other persons legally responsible for the child, to provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child, appropriate direction and guidance in the exercise by the child of the rights recognized in the present Convention.

Article 6

1. States Parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life.

2. States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child.

Article 7

1. The child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality and, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents.

2. States Parties shall ensure the implementation of these rights in accordance with their national law and their obligations under the relevant international instruments in this field, in particular where the child would otherwise be stateless.

Article 8

1. States Parties undertake to respect the right of the child to preserve his or her identity, including nationality, name and family relations as recognized by law without unlawful interference.

2. Where a child is illegally deprived of some or all of the elements of his or her identity, States Parties shall provide appropriate assistance and protection, with a view to speedily re-establishing his or her identity.

Article 9

1. States Parties shall ensure that a child shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will, except when competent authorities subject to judicial review determine, in accordance with applicable law and procedures, that such separation is necessary for the best interests of the child. Such determination may be necessary in a particular case such as one involving abuse or neglect of the child by the parents, or one where the parents are living separately and a decision must be made as to the child's place of residence.

2. In any proceedings pursuant to paragraph 1 of the present article, all interested parties shall be given an opportunity to participate in the proceedings and make their views known.

3. States Parties shall respect the right of the child who is separated from one or both parents to maintain personal relations and direct contact with both parents on a regular basis, except if it is contrary to the child's best interests.

4. Where such separation results from any action initiated by a State Party, such as the detention, imprisonment, exile, deportation or death (including death arising from any cause while the person is in the custody of the State) of one or both parents or of the child, that State Party shall, upon request, provide the parents, the child or, if appropriate, another member of the family with the essential information concerning the

whereabouts of the absent member(s) of the family unless the provision of the information would be detrimental to the well-being of the child. States Parties shall further ensure that the submission of such a request shall of itself entail no adverse consequences for the person(s) concerned.

Article 10

1. In accordance with the obligation of States Parties under article 9, paragraph 1, applications by a child or his or her parents to enter or leave a State Party for the purpose of family reunification shall be dealt with by States Parties in a positive, humane and expeditious manner. States Parties shall further ensure that the submission of such a request shall entail no adverse consequences for the applicants and for the members of their family.

2. A child whose parents reside in different States shall have the right to maintain on a regular basis, save in exceptional circumstances personal relations and direct contacts with both parents. Towards that end and in accordance with the obligation of States Parties under article 9, paragraph 1, States Parties shall respect the right of the child and his or her parents to leave any country, including their own, and to enter their own country. The right to leave any country shall be subject only to such restrictions as are prescribed by law and which are necessary to protect the national security, public order (*ordre public*), public health or morals or the rights and freedoms of others and are consistent with the other rights recognized in the present Convention.

Article 11

1. States Parties shall take measures to combat the illicit transfer and non-return of children abroad.

2. To this end, States Parties shall promote the conclusion of bilateral or multilateral agreements or accession to existing agreements.

Article 12

1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

2. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.

Article 13

1. The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.

2. The exercise of this right may be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:

(*a*) For respect of the rights or reputations of others; or

(*b*) For the protection of national security or of public order (*ordre public*), or of public health or morals.

Article 14

1. States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

2. States Parties shall respect the rights and duties of the parents and, when applicable, legal guardians, to provide direction to the child in the exercise of his or her right in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child.

3. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals, or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

Article 15

1. States Parties recognize the rights of the child to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly.

2. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of these rights other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (*ordre public*), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

Article 16

1. No child shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his or her honour and reputation.

2. The child has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 17

States Parties recognize the important function performed by the mass media and shall ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral well-being and physical and mental health. To this end, States Parties shall:

(*a*) Encourage the mass media to disseminate information and material of social and cultural benefit to the child and in accordance with the spirit of article 29;

(*b*) Encourage international co-operation in the production, exchange and dissemination of such information and material from a diversity of cultural, national and international sources;

(*c*) Encourage the production and dissemination of children's books;

(*d*) Encourage the mass media to have particular regard to the linguistic needs of the child who belongs to a minority group or who is indigenous;

(*e*) Encourage the development of appropriate guidelines for the protection of the child from information and material injurious to his or her well-being, bearing in mind the provisions of articles 13 and 18.

Article 18

1. States Parties shall use their best efforts to ensure recognition of the principle that both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child. Parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians, have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of

the child. The best interests of the child will be their basic concern.

2. For the purpose of guaranteeing and promoting the rights set forth in the present Convention, States Parties shall render appropriate assistance to parents and legal guardians in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities and shall ensure the development of institutions, facilities and services for the care of children.

3. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that children of working parents have the right to benefit from child-care services and facilities for which they are eligible.

Article 19

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.

Article 20

1. A child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her

family environment, or in whose own best interests cannot be allowed to remain in that environment, shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the State.

2. States Parties shall in accordance with their national laws ensure alternative care for such a child.

3. Such care could include, *inter alia*, foster placement, *kafala* of Islamic law, adoption or if necessary placement in suitable institutions for the care of children. When considering solutions, due regard shall be paid to the desirability of continuity in a child's upbringing and to the child's ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background.

Article 21

States Parties that recognize and/or permit the system of adoption shall ensure that the best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration and they shall:

(*a*) Ensure that the adoption of a child is authorized only by competent authorities who determine, in accordance with applicable law and procedures and on the basis of all pertinent and reliable information, that the adoption is permissible in view of the child's status concerning parents, relatives and legal guardians and that, if required, the persons concerned have given their informed consent to the adoption on the basis of such counselling as may be necessary;

(*b*) Recognize that inter-country adoption may be considered as an alternative means of child's care, if the child cannot be placed in a foster or an adoptive family or cannot in any suitable manner be cared for in the child's country of origin;

(*c*) Ensure that the child concerned by inter-country adoption enjoys safeguards and standards equivalent to

those existing in the case of national adoption;

(*d*) Take all appropriate measures to ensure that, in intercountry adoption, the placement does not result in improper financial gain for those involved in it;

(*e*) Promote, where appropriate, the objectives of the present article by concluding bilateral or multilateral arrangements or agreements, and endeavour, within this framework, to ensure that the placement of the child in another country is carried out by competent authorities or organs.

Article 22

1. States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure that a child who is seeking refugee status or who is considered a refugee in accordance with applicable international or domestic law and procedures shall, whether unaccompanied or accompanied by his or her parents or by any other person, receive appropriate protection and humanitarian assistance in the enjoyment of applicable rights set forth in the present Convention and in other international human rights or humanitarian instruments to which the said States are Parties.

2. For this purpose, States Parties shall provide, as they consider appropriate, co-operation in any efforts by the United Nations and other competent intergovernmental organizations or non-governmental organizations co-operating with the United Nations to protect and assist such a child and to trace the parents or other members of the family of any refugee child in order to obtain information necessary for reunification with his or her family. In cases where no parents or other members of the family can be found, the child shall be accorded the same protection as any other child permanently or temporarily deprived of his or her family environment for any reason, as set forth in the present Convention.

Article 23

1. States Parties recognize that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community.

2. States Parties recognize the right of the disabled child to special care and shall encourage and ensure the extension, subject to available resources, to the eligible child and those responsible for his or her care, of assistance for which application is made and which is appropriate to the child's condition and to the circumstances of the parents or others caring for the child.

3. Recognizing the special needs of a disabled child, assistance extended in accordance with paragraph 2 of the present article shall be provided free of charge, whenever possible, taking into account the financial resources of the parents or others caring for the child, and shall be designed to ensure that the disabled child has effective access to and receives education, training, health care services, rehabilitation services, preparation for employment and recreation opportunities in a manner conducive to the child's achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development, including his or her cultural and spiritual development.

4. States Parties shall promote, in the spirit of international cooperation, the exchange of appropriate information in the field of preventive health care and of medical, psychological and functional treatment of disabled children, including dissemination of and access to information concerning methods of rehabilitation, education and vocational services, with the aim of enabling States Parties to improve their capabilities and skills and to widen their experience in these areas. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

Article 24

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. States Parties shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such health care services.

2. States Parties shall pursue full implementation of this right and, in particular, shall take appropriate measures:

(*a*) To diminish infant and child mortality;

(*b*) To ensure the provision of necessary medical assistance and health care to all children with emphasis on the development of primary health care;

(*c*) To combat disease and malnutrition, including within the framework of primary health care, through, *inter alia*, the application of readily available technology and through the provision of adequate nutritious foods and clean drinking-water, taking into consideration the dangers and risks of environmental pollution;

(*d*) To ensure appropriate pre-natal and post-natal health care for mothers;

(*e*) To ensure that all segments of society, in particular parents and children, are informed, have access to education and are supported in the use of basic knowledge of child health and nutrition, the advantages of breast-feeding, hygiene and environmental sanitation and the prevention of accidents;

(*f*) To develop preventive health care, guidance for parents and family planning education and services.

3. States Parties shall take all effective and appropriate

measures with a view to abolishing traditional practices prejudicial to the health of children.

4. States Parties undertake to promote and encourage international co-operation with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the right recognized in the present article. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

Article 25

States Parties recognize the right of a child who has been placed by the competent authorities for the purposes of care, protection or treatment of his or her physical or mental health, to a periodic review of the treatment provided to the child and all other circumstances relevant to his or her placement.

Article 26

1. States Parties shall recognize for every child the right to benefit from social security, including social insurance, and shall take the necessary measures to achieve the full realization of this right in accordance with their national law.

2. The benefits should, where appropriate, be granted, taking into account the resources and the circumstances of the child and persons having responsibility for the maintenance of the child, as well as any other consideration relevant to an application for benefits made by or on behalf of the child.

Article 27

1. States Parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.

2. The parent(s) or others responsible for the child have the primary responsibility to secure, within their abilities and financial capacities, the conditions of living necessary for the child's development.

3. States Parties, in accordance with national conditions and within their means, shall take appropriate measures to assist parents and others responsible for the child to implement this right and shall in case of need provide material assistance and support programmes, particularly with regard to nutrition, clothing and housing.

4. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to secure the recovery of maintenance for the child from the parents or other persons having financial responsibility for the child, both within the State Party and from abroad. In particular, where the person having financial responsibility for the child lives in a State different from that of the child, States Parties shall promote the accession to international agreements or the conclusion of such agreements, as well as the making of other appropriate arrangements.

Article 28

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular:

(*a*) Make primary education compulsory and available free to all;

(*b*) Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need;

(*c*) Make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means;

(*d*) Make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children;

(*e*) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.

2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention.

3. States Parties shall promote and encourage international co-operation in matters relating to education, in particular with a view to contributing to the elimination of ignorance and illiteracy throughout the world and facilitating access to scientific and technical knowledge and modern teaching methods. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

Article 29

1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:

(*a*) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;

(*b*) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;

(*c*) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the

country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;

(*d*) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;

(*e*) The development of respect for the natural environment.

2. No part of the present article or article 28 shall be construed so as to interfere with the liberty of individuals and bodies to establish and direct educational institutions, subject always to the observance of the principles set forth in paragraph 1 of the present article and to the requirements that the education given in such institutions shall conform to such minimum standards as may be laid down by the State.

Article 30

In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language.

Article 31

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

2. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.

Article 32

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

2. States Parties shall take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the implementation of the present article. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, States Parties shall in particular:

(*a*) Provide for a minimum age or minimum ages for admission to employment;

(*b*) Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;

(*c*) Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article.

Article 33

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislative, administrative, social and educational measures, to protect children from the illicit use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances as defined in the relevant international treaties, and to prevent the use of children in the illicit production and trafficking of such substances.

Article 34

States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. For these purposes, States Parties shall in particular take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent:

(*a*) The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity;

(*b*) The exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices;

(*c*) The exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials.

Article 35

States Parties shall take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction of, the sale of or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form.

Article 36

States Parties shall protect the child against all other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child's welfare.

Article 37

States Parties shall ensure that:

(*a*) No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment without possibility of release shall be imposed for offences committed by persons below eighteen years of age;

(*b*) No child shall be deprived of his or her liberty unlawfully or arbitrarily. The arrest, detention or imprisonment of a child shall be in conformity with the law and shall be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time;

(*c*) Every child deprived of liberty shall be treated with humanity and respect for the inherent dignity of the human person, and in a manner which takes into account the needs of persons of his or her age. In particular, every child deprived of liberty shall be separated from adults unless it is considered in the child's best interest not to do so and shall have the right to maintain contact with his or her family through correspondence and visits, save in exceptional circumstances;

(*d*) Every child deprived of his or her liberty shall have the right to prompt access to legal and other appropriate assistance, as well as the right to challenge the legality of the deprivation of his or her liberty before a court or other competent, independent and impartial authority, and to a prompt decision on any such action.

Article 38

1. States Parties undertake to respect and to ensure respect for rules of international humanitarian law applicable to them in armed conflicts which are relevant to the child.

2. States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that persons who have not attained the age of fifteen years do not take a direct part in hostilities.

3. States Parties shall refrain from recruiting any person who has not attained the age of fifteen years into their armed

forces. In recruiting among those persons who have attained the age of fifteen years but who have not attained the age of eighteen years, States Parties shall endeavour to give priority to those who are oldest.

4. In accordance with their obligations under international humanitarian law to protect the civilian population in armed conflicts, States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure protection and care of children who are affected by an armed conflict.

Article 39

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of: any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse; torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; or armed conflicts. Such recovery and reintegration shall take place in an environment which fosters the health, self-respect and dignity of the child.

Article 40

1. States Parties recognize the right of every child alleged as, accused of, or recognized as having infringed the penal law to be treated in a manner consistent with the promotion of the child's sense of dignity and worth, which reinforces the child's respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of others and which takes into account the child's age and the desirability of promoting the child's reintegration and the child's assuming a constructive role in society.

2. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of international instruments, States Parties shall, in particular, ensure that:

(*a*) No child shall be alleged as, be accused of, or recognized as having infringed the penal law by reason of acts or omissions that were not prohibited by national or international law at the time they were committed;

(*b*) Every child alleged as or accused of having infringed the penal law has at least the following guarantees:

(i) To be presumed innocent until proven guilty according to law;

(ii) To be informed promptly and directly of the charges against him or her, and, if appropriate, through his or her parents or legal guardians, and to have legal or other appropriate assistance in the preparation and presentation of his or her defence;

(iii) To have the matter determined without delay by a competent, independent and impartial authority or judicial body in a fair hearing according to law, in the presence of legal or other appropriate assistance and, unless it is considered not to be in the best interest of the child, in particular, taking into account his or her age or situation, his or her parents or legal guardians;

(iv) Not to be compelled to give testimony or to confess guilt; to examine or have examined adverse witnesses and to obtain the participation and examination of witnesses on his or her behalf under conditions of equality;

(v) If considered to have infringed the penal law, to have this decision and any measures imposed in consequence thereof reviewed by a higher

competent, independent and impartial authority or judicial body according to law;

(vi) To have the free assistance of an interpreter if the child cannot understand or speak the language used;

(vii) To have his or her privacy fully respected at all stages of the proceedings.

3. States Parties shall seek to promote the establishment of laws, procedures, authorities and institutions specifically applicable to children alleged as, accused of, or recognized as having infringed the penal law, and, in particular:

(*a*) the establishment of a minimum age below which children shall be presumed not to have the capacity to infringe the penal law;

(*b*) whenever appropriate and desirable, measures for dealing with such children without resorting to judicial proceedings, providing that human rights and legal safeguards are fully respected.

4. A variety of dispositions, such as care, guidance and supervision orders; counselling; probation; foster care; education and vocational training programmes and other alternatives to institutional care shall be available to ensure that children are dealt with in a manner appropriate to their well-being and proportionate both to their circumstances and the offence.

Article 41

Nothing in the present Convention shall affect any provisions which are more conducive to the realization of the rights of the child and which may be contained in:

(*a*) The law of a State Party; or

(*b*) International law in force for that State.

PART II

Article 42

States Parties undertake to make the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known, by appropriate and active means, to adults and children alike.

Article 43

1. For the purpose of examining the progress made by States Parties in achieving the realization of the obligations undertaken in the present Convention, there shall be established a Committee on the Rights of the Child, which shall carry out the functions hereinafter provided.

2. The Committee shall consist of ten experts of high moral standing and recognized competence in the field covered by this Convention. The members of the Committee shall be elected by States Parties from among their nationals and shall serve in their personal capacity, consideration being given to equitable geographical distribution, as well as to the principal legal systems.

3. The members of the Committee shall be elected by secret ballot from a list of persons nominated by States Parties. Each State Party may nominate one person from among its own nationals.

4. The initial election to the Committee shall be held no later than six months after the date of the entry into force of the present Convention and thereafter every second year. At least four months before the date of each election, the Secretary-General of the United Nations shall address a letter to States Parties inviting them to submit their nominations within two months. The Secretary-General shall subsequently prepare a list in alphabetical order of all persons thus nominated, indicating States Parties which have nominated them, and shall submit it to the States Parties to the present Convention.

5. The elections shall be held at meetings of States Parties convened by the Secretary-General at United Nations Headquarters. At those meetings, for which two thirds of States Parties shall constitute a quorum, the persons elected to the Committee shall be those who obtain the largest number of votes and an absolute majority of the votes of the representatives of States Parties present and voting.

6. The members of the Committee shall be elected for a term of four years. They shall be eligible for re-election if renominated. The term of five of the members elected at the first election shall expire at the end of two years; immediately after the first election, the names of these five members shall be chosen by lot by the Chairman of the meeting.

7. If a member of the Committee dies or resigns or declares that for any other cause he or she can no longer perform the duties of the Committee, the State Party which nominated the member shall appoint another expert from among its nationals to serve for the remainder of the term, subject to the approval of the Committee.

8. The Committee shall establish its own rules of procedure.

9. The Committee shall elect its officers for a period of two years.

10. The meetings of the Committee shall normally be held at United Nations Headquarters or at any other convenient place as determined by the Committee. The Committee shall normally meet annually. The duration of the meetings of the Committee shall be determined, and reviewed, if necessary, by a meeting of the States Parties to the present Convention, subject to the approval of the General Assembly.

11. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall provide the necessary staff and facilities for the effective performance of the functions of the Committee under the present Convention.

12. With the approval of the General Assembly, the members of the Committee established under the present Convention shall receive emoluments from the United Nations resources on such terms and conditions as the Assembly may decide.

Article 44

1. States Parties undertake to submit to the Committee, through the Secretary-General of the United Nations, reports on the measures they have adopted which give effect to the rights recognized herein and on the progress made on the enjoyment of those rights:

(*a*) Within two years of the entry into force of the Convention for the State Party concerned;

(*b*) Thereafter every five years.

2. Reports made under the present article shall indicate factors and difficulties, if any, affecting the degree of fulfilment of

the obligations under the present Convention. Reports shall also contain sufficient information to provide the Committee with a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of the Convention in the country concerned.

3. A State Party which has submitted a comprehensive initial report to the Committee need not, in its subsequent reports submitted in accordance with paragraph 1(*b*) of the present article, repeat basic information previously provided.

4. The Committee may request from States Parties further information relevant to the implementation of the Convention.

5. The Committee shall submit to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, every two years, reports on its activities.

6. States Parties shall make their reports widely available to the public in their own countries.

Article 45

In order to foster the effective implementation of the Convention and to encourage international co-operation in the field covered by the Convention:

(*a*) The specialized agencies, the United Nations Children's Fund, and other United Nations organs shall be entitled to be represented at the consideration of the implementation of such provisions of the present Convention as fall within the scope of their mandate. The Committee may invite the specialized agencies, the United Nations Children's Fund and other competent bodies as it may consider appropriate to provide expert advice on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their respective mandates. The Committee may invite the special-

ized agencies, the United Nations Children's Fund, and other United Nations organs to submit reports on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities;

(*b*) The Committee shall transmit, as it may consider appropriate, to the specialized agencies, the United Nations Children's Fund and other competent bodies, any reports from States Parties that contain a request, or indicate a need, for technical advice or assistance, along with the Committee's observations and suggestions, if any, on these requests or indications;

(*c*) The Committee may recommend to the General Assembly to request the Secretary-General to undertake on its behalf studies on specific issues relating to the rights of the child;

(*d*) The Committee may make suggestions and general recommendations based on information received pursuant to articles 44 and 45 of the present Convention. Such suggestions and general recommendations shall be transmitted to any State Party concerned and reported to the General Assembly, together with comments, if any, from States Parties.

PART III

Article 46

The present Convention shall be open for signature by all States.

Article 47

The present Convention is subject to ratification. Instruments

of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Article 48

The present Convention shall remain open for accession by any State. The instruments of accession shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Article 49

1. The present Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day following the date of deposit with the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession.

2. For each State ratifying or acceding to the Convention after the deposit of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession, the Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the deposit by such State of its instrument of ratification or accession.

Article 50

1. Any State Party may propose an amendment and file it with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The Secretary-General shall thereupon communicate the proposed amendment to States Parties, with a request that they indicate whether they favour a conference of States Parties for the purpose of considering and voting upon the proposals. In the event that, within four months from the date of such communication, at least one third of the States Parties favour such a conference, the Secretary-General shall convene the conference under the auspices of the United Nations. Any amendment adopted by a majority of States Parties present

and voting at the conference shall be submitted to the General Assembly for approval.

2. An amendment adopted in accordance with paragraph 1 of the present article shall enter into force when it has been approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations and accepted by a two-thirds majority of States Parties.

3. When an amendment enters into force, it shall be binding on those States Parties which have accepted it, other States Parties still being bound by the provisions of the present Convention and any earlier amendments which they have accepted.

Article 51

1. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall receive and circulate to all States the text of reservations made by States at the time of ratification or accession.

2. A reservation incompatible with the object and purpose of the present Convention shall not be permitted.

3. Reservations may be withdrawn at any time by notification to that effect addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall then inform all States. Such notification shall take effect on the date on which it is received by the Secretary-General.

Article 52

A State Party may denounce the present Convention by written notification to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Denunciation becomes effective one year after the date of receipt of the notification by the Secretary-General.

Article 53

The Secretary-General of the United Nations is designated as the depositary of the present Convention.

Article 54

The original of the present Convention, of which the Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts are equally authentic, shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

In witness thereof the undersigned plenipotentiaries, being duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments, have signed the present Convention.

For further information, please contact:

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